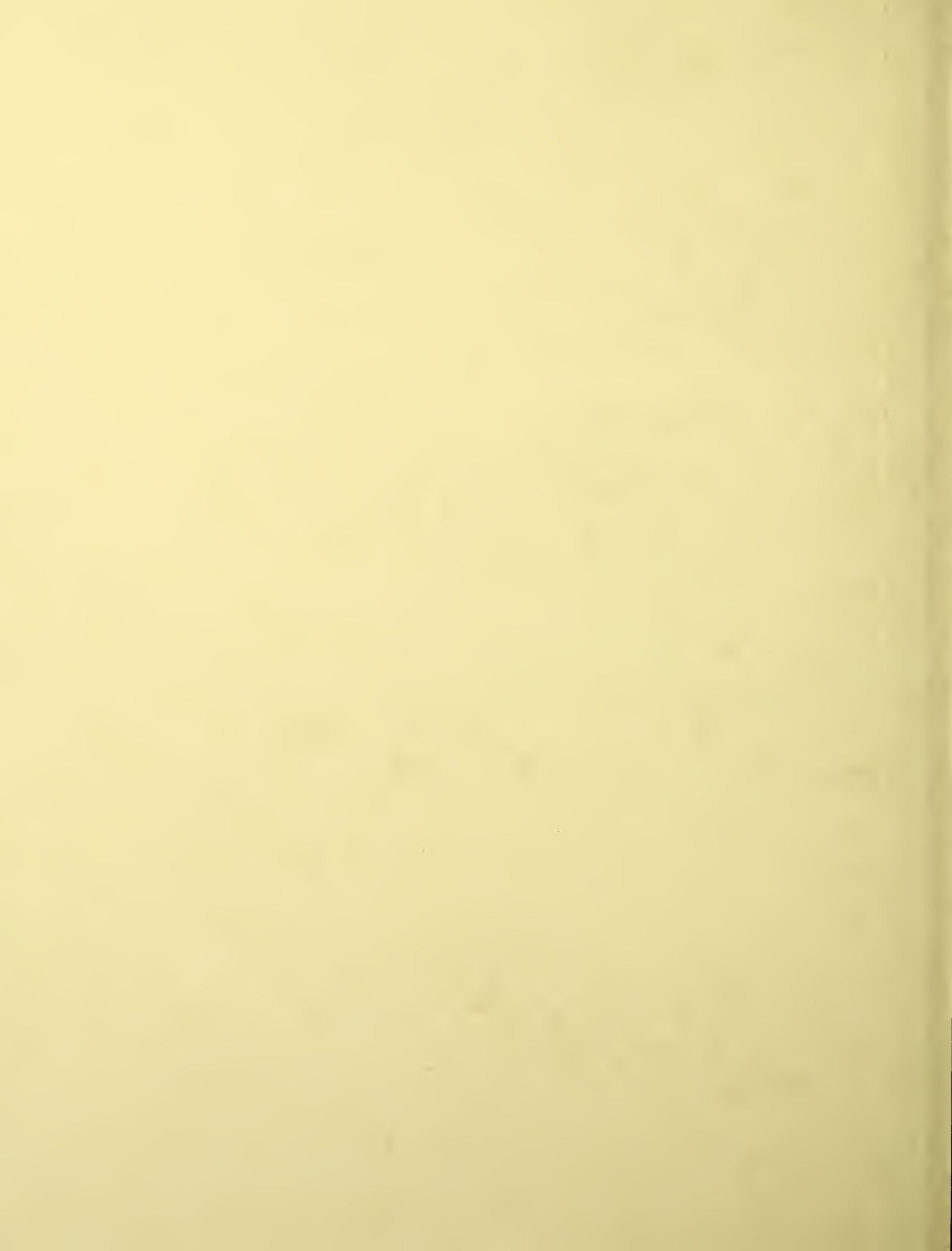


Drad 12H, 4100A

Drawer 19a

Artists- B

71.2009 083 04461



Artists of Abraham Lincoln portraits

Alvah Bradish

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

OFFICE OF
JOHN D. DENISON, LAWYER
1114-1116 CAPITOL THEATRE BLDG.
PHONE 3-2743
DES MOINES, IOWA

Jan'y 19th
1942

Mr. Louis A. Warren,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Wootor:

I have a picture of Lincoln,
about 24' x 30', an oil painting by
A. Bradich - sometimes spelled "Bradish".
The history connected with it is
rather interesting. The painting is
on a good quality of canvas. I have
had it since 1865, with it is a letter
by the artist, dated Dec 22nd 1861 at
Washington. D.C.

I desire to sell the painting. If
you are interested in the story, kindly
advise me and I will write the
story and send photograph of the picture
and a part of the letter.
Very truly,
John D. Denison



January 22, 1942

Mr. John D. Denison, Lawyer
1114-1116 Capitol Theatre Bldg.
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Mr. Denison:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of January 19 to Dr. Warren who is absent from Fort Wayne on his annual speaking itinerary and wish to state that we would be interested in receiving full information about the picture of Abraham Lincoln which you have done by Bradich.

Yours very truly,

MAC:WM
M.A.Cook

1870

1870

1870

1870

1870

1870

Iowa State Library

Des Moines

May 30th
1892

Hon. Wm. A. Warren,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is the story of my
"Lincoln Picture". It is easier to use
my pencil, so, with apologies, I am

Very Truly Yours

Edwin Emerson,

1891

1892

1893

1894

1895

1896

1897

1898

1899

1900

1901

1902

1903

1904

1905

1906

1907

1908

1909

1910

1911

1912

1913

1914

1915

1916

1917

John State Library
Des Moines

Jan 30th
1942

①

Hon. Louis B. Warren,
Hottelwaym, Ind.
Dear Sir:

In 1908, August, I was returning from a visit to Mayo Brothers Hospital at Rochester, Minn., to Bourne where I then lived. This involved a change of cars at Winona, Minn. On the train from Rochester to Winona, I met a young man who was selling a set of books called the "Morena". This set consisted of several volumes and contained various Viking sagas, the Old and Younger Eddas, and material of a similar sort, designed for sale.

2) Iowa State Library

Des Moines

to Norwegians, Swedes, Finns, Germans
and people generally who had come
from the Baltic and neighboring places.
He and I got acquainted, took
a bus for the same hotel "The Merchants".
We reached there about 6 o'clock P.M.,
walked and went into the living room
together. As we entered he stopped
and pointed to a picture at the left
of the door and remarked "There is a
fine picture of mine". We stopped and
looked at it. It was dark in the hallway
yet the picture was attractive. We
looked at it again when we came
out from dinner. The lights had been

Iowa State Library
Des Moines

3)

Turned on in the meantime - but the picture still looks good. My companion remarked that he had seen the painting before here on some other trip and he thought it a fine picture of Lincoln.

Our train did not leave, going south, until about 9 P.M. so we sat down in the rather large lobby of the hotel. The proprietor, a Quaker man of about 60 years, and talkative came over and we conversed. He had seen us looking at the picture and asked if we were interested in it. We showed no particular interest, but he went right on talking. He said that it was an original painting, that it



4) Iowa State Library

Des Moines

came into his family when he married his second wife who was the sister of the painter, that it was valuable, that when Winona got its Carnegie library, the townspeople wanted him to put the picture into the library, but, he said, "I don't care anything about me, they just wanted my picture". He said he saw him regarding the new State Capitol Building at St. Paul. And much more of the same sort. We continued to talk. Finally, I said what is the lowest price that you will take for the picture. He replied "1000".

John State Library
Des Moines

5)
said "Now I don't know whether you
have a great oil painting or a fine
cut chromo, but I'll take a gambler's
chance and give you \$75.00 for it". He
said "well I'll go upstairs and see
what my wife says about it - it
really belongs to her". So he went up
an open staircase opening out of the lobby.
Pretty soon he came down, came up
to me and said "we think you probably
have a better place to keep that
picture than we have and if you
want it for \$75.00 you may have
it". I don't have that much money
with me but I do have a check
book and a business card. So I

Iowa State Library

Des Moines

B) wrote a check for \$75.00, payable to
the following — whose name I now
forget — with a note of agreement on
the card to the effect that when the
check had gone through my bank
at Dubuque, he would send the picture
to me by Express. I took the Milwaukee
train south at about 9 o'clock P.M. and
about a week later the picture, all
carefully packed, came to town. I
had it sent to the city library where it
was unpacked and hung. The girls
there brought it a good picture and
told me that within about a week
they would be having an art



Iowa State Library

Des Moines

7)

Exhibition and that an expert would
be out from the Carrington Art Co. at
Chicago who would give me a
real Simon Wall, Mr. Y. L. L. came,
he saw the picture and I saw
him, he told me that he was
very familiar with Linde pictures,
that this one was undoubtedly an
original, that it was on a very
good quality of canvas, that he had
seen the picture in the hotel at Vienna
and had intended to go back there
and buy it and remember that
I had gotten ahead of him.

④
Iowa State Library
Des Moines

Charlie Walton of Dubuque, took the
old frame - silver - off and put it in a
heavy gold frame. He also cleaned
the picture. It was simply and bare.
Since then I have had this
painting hanging over my fireplace.
Some other people, including my
father, who has seen Lincoln when alive
have pronounced the painting an excellent
likeness.
The canvas is about 20" by 20". On the
back of it is the letter which the artist,
A. Bravich, wrote to his sister when
he sent her the picture from
Washington, D.C. Letter is dated Dec.
22nd 1867.

9)
Iowa State Library
Des Moines

It is signed "C. B. Bowditch".

I would like to sell this painting.
I have a rather poor photograph of it
and of one sentence of the letter.
This is the item.

Very truly
yours

John W. Harrison.

February 3, 1942

Mr. John D. Denison
Iowa State Library
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Mr. Denison:

Will you please forward the photograph of the Lincoln painting which you say you have so that I may attach it to your correspondence to Dr. Warren for his examination upon his return to Fort Wayne.

What price are you asking for this painting?

Yours very truly,

MAC:WM
M.A.Cook

*sent letter to Adeline
Ann Arbor.*

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900

OFFICE OF
JOHN D. DENISON, LAWYER
1114-1116 CAPITOL THEATRE BLDG.
PHONE 3-2743
DES MOINES, IOWA

2
6/19/42x

Dear Mr. Coker: ~

I am sending you under
another cover, by this mail, photograph
of the Lincoln picture and the Bradich
letter. This photograph of the picture, of
course, does not do it justice.

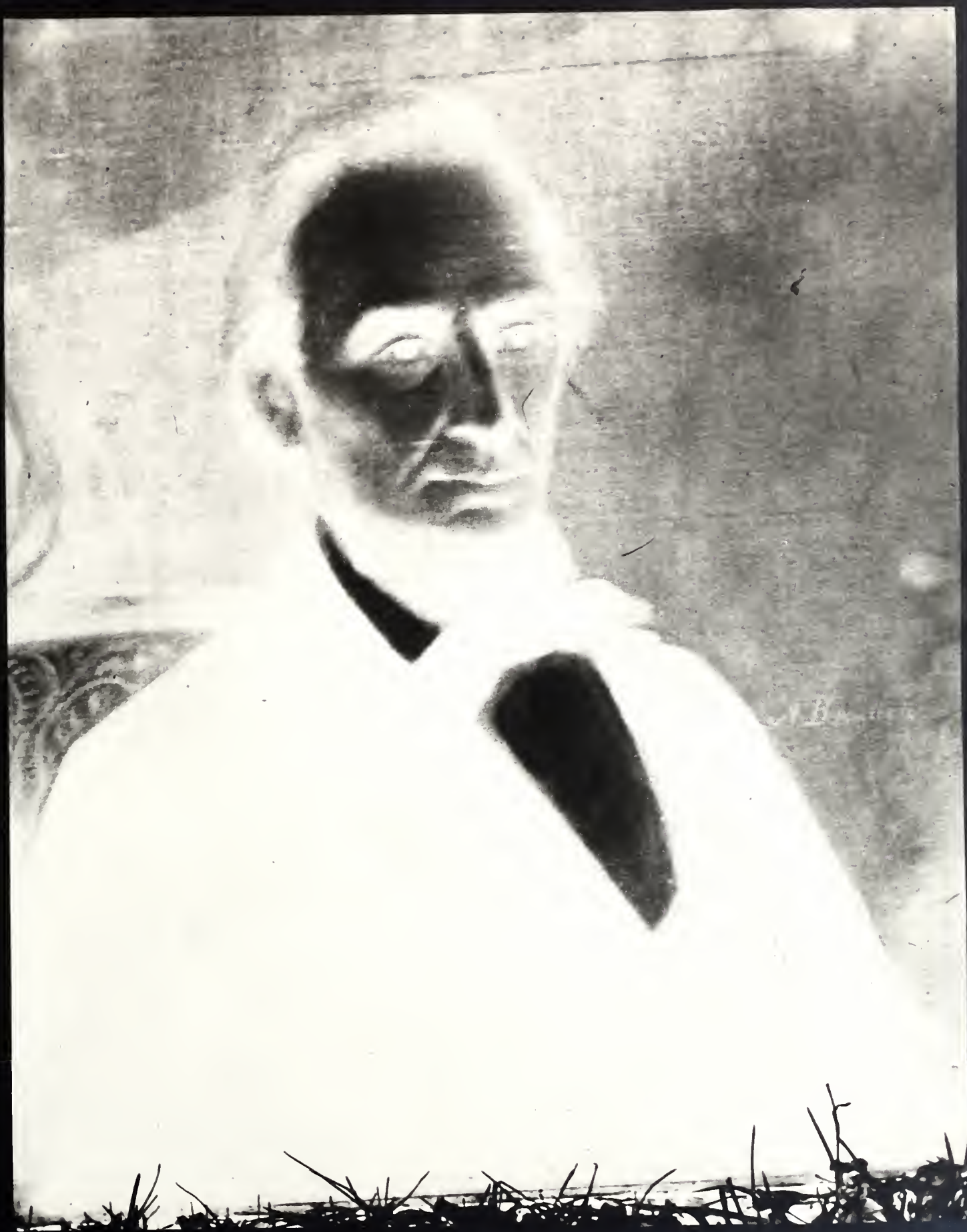
I would sell the painting; but, frankly
I would not know what a fair
price for it is.

By the way, the name of the
art expert mentioned in my penciled
letter is "Luthers" - correction.

Very Truly Yours


John D. Denison

P.S. The painting is now
in Westport, North, my son.
It could be sent to you or
you could see it there.
J.D.D.



December 22nd 1867

Dear Sister, As Christmas this year finds
me in poor health, with very little money,
not wishing to forget you and Father, I send
you my favorite painting of President Lincoln.
Wishing you both a merry Xmas
and a happy New Year—

A. Bradich

March 17, 1942

Mr. John D. Denison
1114-1116 Capitol Theatre Bldg.
Des Moines, Iowa

My dear Mr. Denison:

Back at my desk I find your letter written in January awaiting my attention.

We have done what we could to find out something about the painter, Mr. Bradick, but still have been unable to find very much about its origin.

Of course, if it had a definite history we might be interested in it; however, we feel that inasmuch as it is nothing more than just another painting possibly we would not care to acquire it. You might, however, set a price upon it so that we may come to some definite conclusion with respect to it.

Very truly yours,

LAW:WM

Director

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900

Iowa State Library

Des Moines

Mich 18th
1942x

Mr. Louis A. Warren,
Fort Wayne Ind.

Dear Mr. Warren:

The Lincoln picture is now with
my son in Detroit, Mich. I want to sell
it. Supposing I have it packed and
shipped to you; you could then make your
own estimate of it and make me an
offer for it, if you so desire. Through a
man who used to sell me water colors, I
found that Dravich did considerable work
for steel magnates and such in western
Pennsylvania, about Pittsburgh, etc.

Very Truly Yours,

John Denison

215 R. M. C. B. 2nd

March 20, 1942

Mr. John D. Denison
Iowa State Library
Des Moines, Iowa

My dear Mr. Denison:

I rather feel it would not be best to have the painting shipped to us as we are not especially interested in it although we do have a great many inquiries for different types of pictures here and thought if we did have some price which you placed upon it and it is favorable there might be a possibility of our disposing of it for you although I do not think we would be especially interested in hanging it on our wall here.

Very truly yours,

LAW:WM

Director

1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

1875

JOHN D. DENISON
STATE LIBRARIAN

Bradick

Iowa State Library

Des Moines

May 23rd 1942

Dear Mr. Warren:

I thought perhaps, if you could see the picture under a proper light - you might like it, and perhaps aid me in selling it. Really, it is a pretty good piece of work, quite fit to adorn a library or a club room.

Very truly yours,

~~John D. Denison~~
John D. Denison

OFFICE OF
JOHN D. DENISON, LAWYER
DES MOINES, IOWA

April 28, 1942

Hon. Louis A. Warren
Fort Wayne, Indiana
Care of Lincoln National Life Foundation

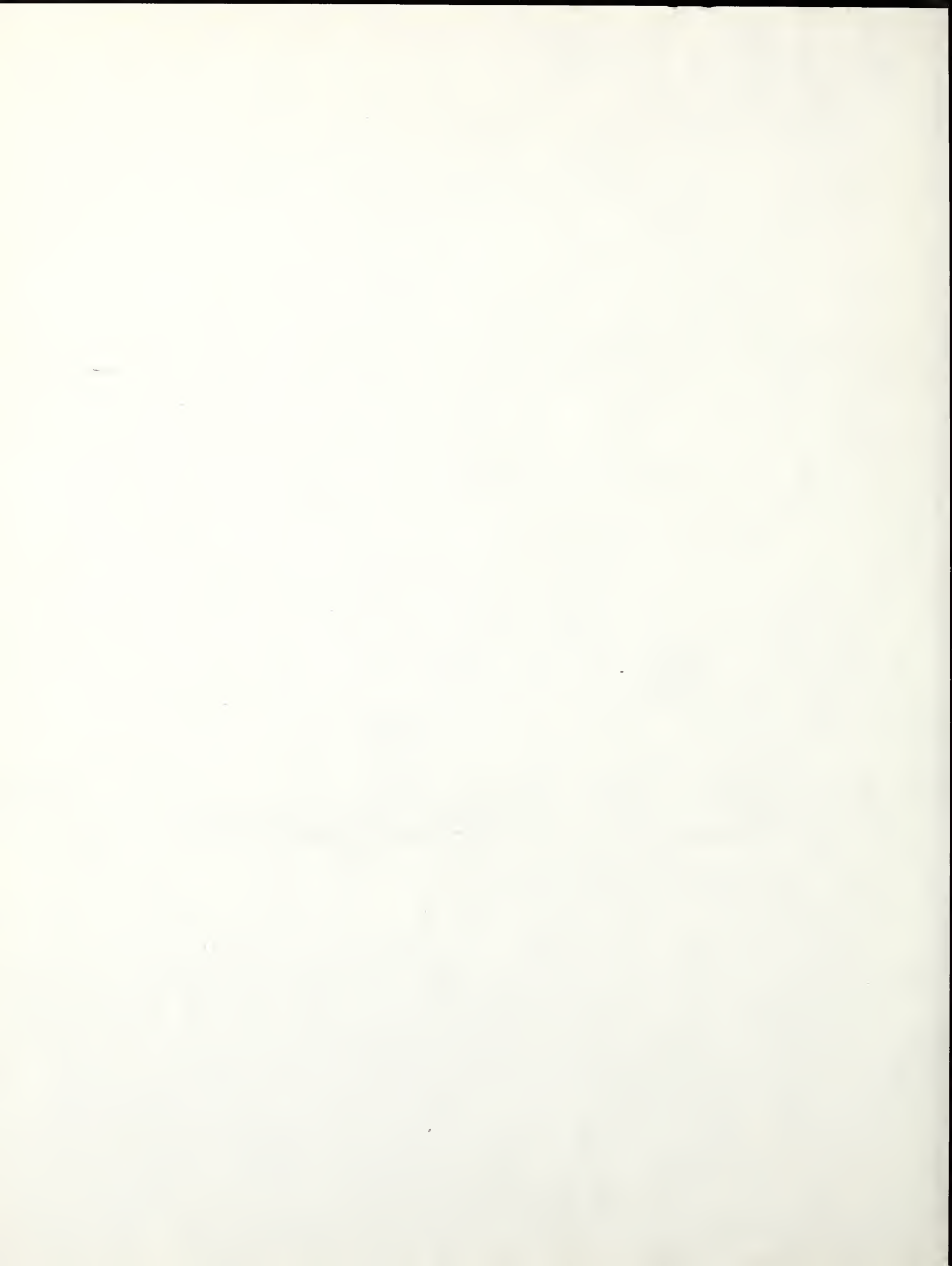
Dear Mr. Warren:

I will be obliged if you will return
to me the photograph of the Lincoln Pic-
ture; also the photograph of part of the
Bradich letter.

Very truly yours,


John D. Denison

JDD:ppt



May 1, 1942

Mr. John D. Denison, Lawyer
Des Moines, Iowa

My dear Mr. Denison:

Thank you very much for allowing us to see the picture and also for your very complete description of the painting in your possession. We hope you will be successful in finding a buyer and we will also be alert here to any inquiries that may come with respect to an available painting.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director

1900-1901

1901-1902

1902-1903

1903-1904

1904-1905

1905-1906

1906-1907



3 April 1946

Dear Dr. Warren:

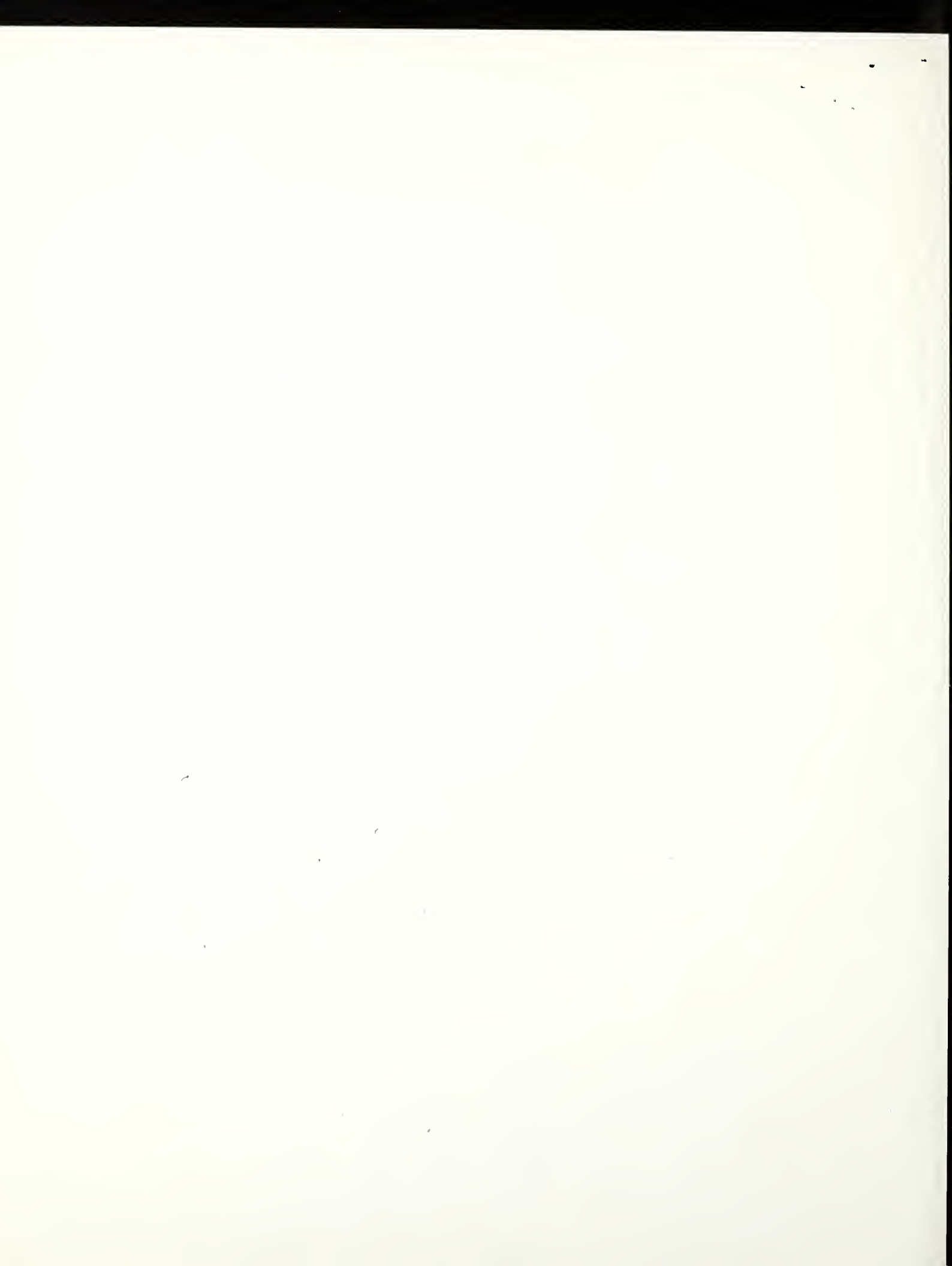
The owner of this Alva Bradish painting of Lincoln is offered to the University of Michigan because Alva Bradish was the first professor of Fine Arts here. The owner asks a large sum for it and when I laughed, heartily at such a sum, he good humoredly said, "Well, pickⁱⁿ some third party and I will agree with his valuation." We have no evidence that this painting was done from life.

Would you be willing to tell us what you think it is worth? We would greatly appreciate your help in the matter. This isn't a question of what a dealer might sell it for, but what a dealer would probably give for it. The picture is signed near Lincoln's left shoulder and I can testify that the words "Alva Bradish" are exactly like those on other specimens of Bradish's work, owned by the University. On the back of the painting is the letter by which Bradish gives the picture to his sister in 1867.

Sincerely

R. G. Adams
Randolph G. Adams

RGA/rhs
Enc.
Dr. Louis A. Warren
Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana



April 5, 1946

Mr. Randolph G. Adams
The Clements Library
Univ. of Mich.
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Mr. Adams:

I have been checking through our files and find inquiries asking prices for studies of about the same character as the Bradish canvass:

It would appear that the artistic value of the painting would not being a price above the lowest figures noted above. A sentimental value such as Michigan would have in this instance, you would be more able to appraise. I do not know who would want it except for its sentimental value.

Dr. Louis Warren



10 April 1946

Dear Dr. Warren:

I return, herewith, the letter of Mr. John Denison, owner of the Alva Bradish portrait of Lincoln.

Thank you for your letter summarizing past prices. This is a great help to me. I am inclined to think that the principal value of the painting is a sentimental one, to the University of Michigan and shall so advise the interested parties. I am very grateful for your help in this matter.

Sincerely

Randolph G. Adams
Randolph G. Adams

RGA/rhs

Dr. L. A. Warren
The Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana



telephone conversation with Bill Butz of Main St Books revealing what we have in our files
he has the original of the Bradich letter to his sister...it was his understanding we had
the picture, I advised him we do not and told him about the Michigan correspondence 10/23/95

Jim Eber, Research Assistant

Harvard
Bill
Butz
BRADICH
A.
10/23/95

EMANCIPATION
PAGE

10/20

Town Talk---by Stark

By GEORGE W. STARK

ALVAH BRADISH, who in the middle of the last century, dwelled in Detroit, passing his days placidly painting the portraits of distinguished Detroiters and Michiganians, may have reduced to canvas the features of a great American—Abraham Lincoln.

A Lincoln picture has lately come to light in Detroit and among art authorities has stirred a speculation that it may have been the original work of Bradish. The picture is now being restored in New York. The strongest evidence to support the theory that it is the work of Bradish is contained in a note which was attached to the back of the picture. It reads: "December 22nd, 1867. Dear Sister—As Christmas this year finds me in poor health with very little money, not wishing to forget you and Father, I send you my favorite painting of President Lincoln. Wishing you both a merry Xmas and a Happy New Year — A. Bradish." It's a curious fact that this Bradish spells his name here with a "c" — Bradich — but historians have always spelled it Bradish.

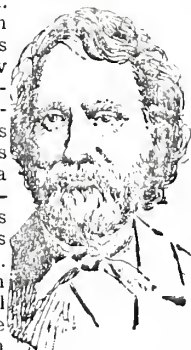
Not many in Detroit today will recognize the name of Alvah Bradish. It is Alvah Bradish buried in the perishing tradition of Old Detroit, along with that of Douglass Houghton, whose sister he married and who was mayor of Detroit 100 years ago. Let the Detroit News-Tribune of Jan. 17, 1897, acquaint you with his career.

"Coming to Detroit as long ago as passes the memory of the oldest man or woman now alive," the article says, "Alvah Bradish still has his easel set and is still painting portraits. There is a list of over 500 paintings, the work of his hand and brain and appended to it is a line of approbation from

days when no Detroiters had yet risen to the dignity of owning a carriage and when the light-hearted manners of the all-pervading French gave life and color to the old town. Bradish painted the pretty, black-eyed French girls and he painted their mothers and in due course he painted their children's children.

"The greatest men in Michigan and in the Northwest sat before his easel . . . His lectures on art, at the University of Michigan, were a feature of early days there and when the lectures were discontinued, a petition, signed by the first people in Detroit and the State, asked that he be restored to the chair of fine arts."

THE LIST of Bradish portraits would have to include those of Gen. Lewis Cass, Charles Larned, Gen. Hugh Brady, Senator Thomas W. Palmer, George Duffield and his unforgettable portrait of Dr. Douglass Houghton, now hanging in the State Capitol at Lansing. Clyde H. Burroughs, of the Detroit Institute of Arts, cites the portraits of early Detroit Mayors, hanging in the City Hall and also calls attention to the fact that Bradish was a deep student of literature



The Lincoln portrait may conceivably be one of them.

ITS THEIR BIRTHDAY

OCT. 13

Darius McLean, 1861.

*William H. Young, 1864.

Dr. Herbert W. Hewitt, 1875.

Malcolm I. MacGregor, 1894.

*Native Detroiters.

TODAY IN WORLD WAR I

OCT. 12, 1917: Mobilization of women for war work goes on apace in Detroit, with the emphasis on stenography, although many of the younger set are going in for nursing, canteen work and ambulance driving. Among the girls who enrolled in a special war work class in stenography were Elizabeth Miller, Elizabeth Clark, Helen Scully, Elise Ducharme, Helen Marshall, Mildred Melchers, Sara Williard, Marie Copland.

THE CHIP BASKET

AMONG our recent birthday guests was Henry Schwesinger, 3790 Columbus avenue . . . Born in Drayton Plains, Mich., 81 years ago, he came to Detroit at 14 to begin a man's work . . . When he was 21 he built the house at 3519 Bagley avenue (then Baker street), just

west of West Grand Boulevard, one of the finest houses built in that section which was then considered "out in the woods" . . . To that house he brought his young bride and they raised six children . . . His daily work was the tender care of pianos and it is said of him that he was the very first to put a piano player inside of a piano . . . There was nothing ever wrong about a piano or player that he could not fix . . . He still proudly displays the faded newspaper clippings of the time which reported his revolving Christmas trees, lighted with tiny gas lamps of various colors, instead of the usual wax candles in general use before electric lights came along.

December 22nd 1867
Dear Sister,
As Christmas this year finds
me in poor health with very little money,
not wishing to forget you and Father, I send
you my favorite painting of President Lincoln.
Wishing you both a merry Xmas
and a happy New Year—
A. Bradich

Bradish's letter.

Bela Hubbard. "It is a notable work," wrote Hubbard, "the record of a noble life."

WHEN Bradish came to Detroit (from Geneva, N. Y.), there was only one portrait in the town. He brought letters of introduction to the best people and they quickly opened their houses to him and invited him everywhere. In the cheery, open hospitality of earlier Detroit, Alvah Bradish had played his important part. Those were the

and wrote an excellent biography of Dr. Houghton, whose career was brief but dramatic, leaving an imprint on our own times.

Researchers also find that Artist Bradish made a pilgrimage to Sleepy Hollow and painted Washington Irving.

The artist died a poor man in 1901, but he left many tokens of his busy life behind him.

Dradick, Alva

Drawer 19a

Artists-B

